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HISTORIC SKETCH
OF
COVENTRY, CONNECTICUT

PREPARED BY
MAUDE GRIDLEY PETERSON

ON THE OCCASION OF THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN AND OF THE OR-
GANIZATION OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

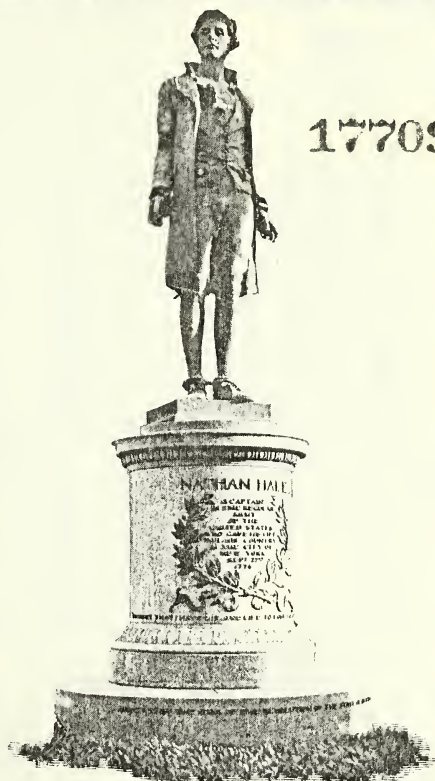
BICENTENNIAL POEM

BY
RUTH AMELIA HIGGINS

OFFICIAL PROGRAM

OLD HOME WEEK
BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
AUGUST 25-31, 1912

HISTORIC SKETCH WITH VIEWS OF COVENTRY, CONNECTICUT



1770928

STATUE TO NATHAN HALE IN
CITY HALL PARK, NEW YORK

OFFICIAL PROGRAM

OLD HOME WEEK
BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

1712-1912

HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Historic sketch of Coventry, Connecticut, prepared by Maude Gridley Peterson on the occasion of the two hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of the town and of the organization of the First Congregational church. Bicentennial poem, by Ruth Amelia Higgins. Official program. Old home week bicentennial celebration August 25-31, 1912. (Coventry? Conn., 1912.)

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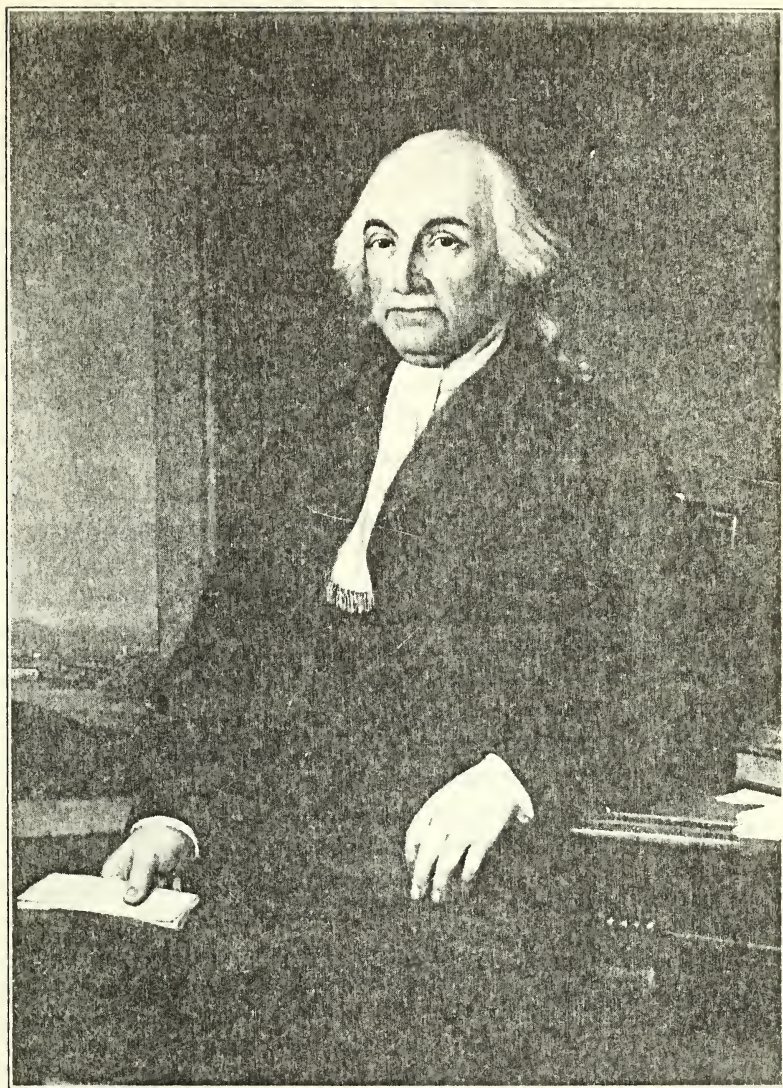
1. Coventry, Conn.--Hist. I. Higgins, Ruth Amelia.

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JESSE ROOT.

Photograph from the painting of Jesse Root by Wheeler, now in the State Library, Hartford. Jesse Root was born in Coventry December 28th, 1736, was a member of the Second Continental Congress 1778-83, and Chief Justice of Connecticut 1796-1807.

PREFACE

On the occasion of the celebration of two hundred years of the existence of Coventry, Conn., it has seemed fitting to look back along the years and trace some of the steps in its development.


An attempt has been made to sketch from the early colonial and town records and other sources an account of the beginnings of the town. The advance during that time of its institutions and its industrial life is traced. Its share in the affairs of colony and nation is briefly touched upon and abbreviated accounts of some of Coventry's prominent men are added. Circumstances have allowed the author but a week in which to classify and compile material for the pamphlet. An especial attempt for accuracy has been made, that the material may be of an authoritative nature. The limited time, however, makes many omissions of important matter probable. The accomplishment of the task allotted would have been impossible but for the helpful co-operation of my husband, Arthur Everett Peterson, and the valued assistance of many others. Dr. Wm. L. Higgins, President of the Town Committee, has been untiring in his aid. Mr. Curtis Dean, Secretary and Historian, has shared with me valuable material. Mr. Addison Kingsbury contributed the list of present day manufacturers. Mr. and Mrs. Albert Woodworth have, from their extended memories of the older people and places, been most helpful. Among others who have contributed from their store of knowledge are various members of the Hilltop Home Club, Mr. and Mrs. John M. Wood, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Henry F. Parker.

To the State Librarian in Hartford I would offer sincere thanks for every possible courtesy and help in the use of the valuable manuscripts and texts preserved there. During Old Home Week, and even later, the Librarian will have on exhibition in Memorial Hall at the State Library Building, manuscripts connected with the early days in Coventry. Any interested may inspect them there at will. Thanks are also due to the Connecticut Historical Librarian and to Frank D. Andrews of the Historical Library in Vineland, N. J., for further aid. The latter furnished the engraving for the print of Lorenzo Dow and the sketch of his life which accompanies it.

HISTORIC SKETCH

MAUDE GRIDLEY PETERSON

Incorporation of Town of Coventry


(Brand Mark)



OCTOBER 11, 1711, two hundred and one years ago, the legislative body of the colony of Connecticut incorporated and named the town of Coventry. In this act provision was also made for procuring and settling a minister of the gospel in the best way and as soon as possible. A brand mark, as above, was fixed as the distinguishing mark for Coventry horses.

The Name Coventry

Comparison of a map of England and one of New England shows an interesting similarity of names of places. "Coventry" is on both maps and we are surrounded by places bearing the names of those across the sea. Among those in the immediate locality are Andover, Bolton, Mansfield, Ashford, Canterbury, Hampton, Stafford, Enfield, Colchester, Woodstock, Norwich, and New London.

The following act of the Connecticut Assembly, 1658, in connection with the naming of New London so well illustrates the custom of early nomenclature that it is quoted here:

"Whereas it hath been the commendable practice of the inhabitants of all the colonies of these parts, that as this country hath its denomination from our dear native country of England, and thence is called New England, so that planters, in their first settling of most new plantations, have given names to those plantations of some cities and towns in England, thereby intending to keep up, and leave to posterity the memorial of several places of note there, as Boston, Hartford, Windsor, York, Ipswich, Braintree, Exeter: this court considering, that there hath yet no place in any of the colonies, been named in memory of the city of London, there being a new plantation within this jurisdiction of Connecticut, settled upon that fair river Mohegan, in the Pequot country, being an excellent harbor and a fit and convenient place for future trade, it being also the only place which the English in these parts have possessed by conquest, and that upon a very just war, upon that great and warlike people, the Pequots, that therefore they might

thereby leave to posterity the memory of that renowned city of London, from whence we had our transportation, have thought fit, in honor to that famous city, to call the said plantation New London."

The name of the river Mohegan was also changed to Thames.

Old Coventry, founded it is said, in the eleventh century, is situated on an eminence in a valley, while to the south stretches a ridge of hills. From our own hilltops the bounding ridges of hills may be seen in all directions. It is thought that a similarity of landscape may have suggested the name for our town. An invitation from Coventry, New England, has gone over the Atlantic to Coventry, Old England, to participate in some way in the celebration which its namesake is enjoying at this time.

Aboriginal Inhabitants

The furrowing plow occasionally reveals traces of inhabitants previous to the time when the Coventry of now became Coventry. About Lake Wamgumbaug, along the banks of the Willimantic River, and sometimes in scattered places over the hills, the upturned Indian arrow-heads are mute witnesses of the one time presence of the red man. Tradition says that the Indians used the land



A view of Lake Wamgumbaug, taken from Nathan Hale Cemetery.

hereabouts as a hunting ground, which they kept burned over to furnish good pasturage for game. With water supply in lake and river and good feeding ground, we can fancy the herds of deer grazing about then as they do now. Indeed, years of protection may mean that they are even more plentiful now than then. As many as fifteen have been seen together at a time and the gardens and crops sometimes suffer from their depredations. It is interesting to note that as early as 1718 attempt was made to protect by law deer during the breeding season.

The burned-over grounds must have simplified for the early settlers the problem of clearing the land and made transportation in the vicinity much easier. It is said that at this time an ox-cart could be driven over most of the young timber growth which had started since the lands came into the hands of the white men and the yearly fires of the Indians had ceased.

The Mohegan Indians, a friendly tribe, held much land in this section and the white men's title to it was received by will from Joshua, sachem, the third son of Uncas. Records of the will are in the State Library at Hartford. It includes several legacies to different groups of men. Parts of Coventry seemed to be disputed territory between two of these groups, which was responsible for early difficulties over land titles.

Joshua made careful provisions for his children as regards property and their upbringing. "Further my Will is that my Children be brought up the first four years with Trusty and their mother to teach them English * * * and that the expiration of the said four Years I desire that my Children may be kept at the English Schoole." He wishes them kept apart from the "Connecticott" Indians. He asks to be buried at "Seybrook in a Coffin after the English manner" and disposes of personal treasures, giving his Guns to his two Sons, four to each of them, his Pistoll to his eldest son, and his seven Brass kettles and four iron pots to be equally divided to his three children.

Surveys and Settlements

About 1706, Wm. Pitkin, Maj. Joseph Talcott, Wm. Whiting and Richard Lord were appointed a committee to manage the lands of the legatees so as to promote their growth. Nathaniel Rust, who

had settled on land here, was later added to the committee. In the earliest volume of Town Records in Coventry is a map as shown on folder facing page 1. The survey was made in March, 1708, with the lands set off in allotments and highways planned. Three reservation allotments were set off for use of church and school. On this map is noted the house and lot of one Samuel Burchard, abutting on the southwest shore of the "Big Pond." The value of the water power from the outlet of the lake for the location of a grist-mill was even then forecasted in the naming of the stream "Mill Brook."

The volume of town records previously mentioned has an interesting list of the allotments drawn by Joshua's legatees:

To Mr. Samuel Willis 15-20-42-51-61
To Coll John Talcott's heirs 7-25-45-59-72
To Mr. James Richards & his heirs 6-18-11-47-66
To Coll. John Allin his heirs 12-16-38-56-71
To Mr. William Pitkin's heirs 10-27-43-60-61
To Mr. Richard Lord's heirs 8-17-34-54-65
To Nathaniel Willit's heirs 14-21-44-57-70
To Thos Burnham's heirs 4-22-31-46-63
To Cap^t Jos Fitch assigns 3-28-40-52-73
To Cap^t Nicholas Olmstead 11-26-32-55-62
To Cap^t Thomas Bull's heirs 5-23-33-49-67
To Barth Barnard's heirs 1-24-37-53-69
To Mr. John Hains his heirs 13-19-36-50-75
To Mr. Hinyry Howard—heirs 9-29-39-48-71
To Mr. Eleaz^{er} Ways heirs 2-30-35-58-68

Settlers for some of these various allotments were later sought.

The term settlers is such a substantial one and prophetic of progress. For many hundreds of years the Indians had doubtless roamed these hills and dales, but with no appreciable sign of advancement. The white man *settled* and the era of advancing civilization in Coventry started and has gone on with the intervening years, as the results of to-day show.

Copies of the following documents in possession of the State Library in Hartford give hints of the condition of the country here from 1700 to 1709 or 1710:

(Towns and Lands, Vol. 5, P. 29)

Testimony. Benjamin Howard of full age Testifyeth that about 14 years ago I lived at Wungumbang now Coventry and I was Settled there by the proprietors of said Land Given by Joshua Indian Sachem Viz. by Mr William Pitkin, Col. Whiting and the rest of the Committee Improved by the proprietors and that Sam^l Birchard with his family lived there at the Same Time and I often heard him Say upon the Same Right. the wife of Benja^a Howard Testifyeth unto the above written. Sworn in Court, Auguft 17th, 1711.

A True Copy on file Test Hez Wyllys Clerk.

(Towns and Lands, V. 29)

The Testimony of John Meakins and Samuel Meakins both of Lawfull age—Testify and say, that four or five Years ago at the Least: Last Michaelmas, Wee being out in the Wilderness, Looking for hordes, Took up our Lodging at a house in the Wilderness on the Southward Side of a Pond now called Coventry Pond, which house went by the name of Birchard's house and went Round s^d pond and Saw no house there at that time besides that which Wee Lay in and having Ocaasion to go into the Wilderness that way the Last winter was two years since & Comming to the above s^d Pond or place now Called Coventry and We Saw on both Sides of the pond houses built and Land fenced and improved which land was reputed Joshua's right and claimed by M^r Richards and M^r Pitkin and Sundry other Gentlemen of Hartford.

Hartford Aprill 17th, 1714—Sworn in Court Aprill 17th, 1714. Test. Hez Wyllys Clerk.

A True Copy on file—Test Hez. Wyllys Clerk.

A petition presented to the General Court in 1712 gives the number of families at about sixteen. Trumbull says that the early families came principally from Hartford and Northampton, Mass.

About 1712 we get trace of an attempt on the part of the proprietors to increase the population of the town. The wife of Richard Lord, after the death of her husband, sends a petition in May, 1712, to the Assembly that, whereas "the proprietors of Said Lands have Agreed to Settle about Sixty Families in the town your memorialist should settle 2 Allottments for the encouragement and Settlement

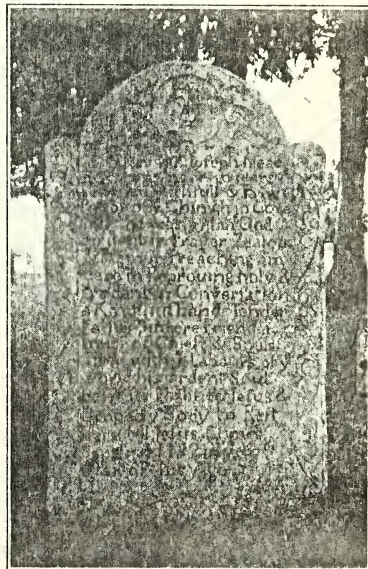
of Said Town by Which the Other part of the lands My lait Husband was Heir to will be more valuable for His children." She therefore asked for permission to sell these allotments, which was granted.

That the struggle for existence still continued, however, is indicated in a petition which was sent to the Governor and General Court in May, 1717. Here the "petitioners" pray that they may be "releaved" from their present difficulties. "Our charges to maintain the worship of God are greate and heavy by the reason of the smallness of our numbers and wee increas very sloly. * * * A part of our Land is nott settled by any inhabitants so that the burden is Like to bee very heavy upon us unless we can have some releas." It is at this same time that the settlers ask that their "neighbors That Live between Coventry south line and Hop River may be joyned to our Town." It was not until 1723 that the territory asked for and known as the Mile and Quarter was resolved annexed to Coventry.

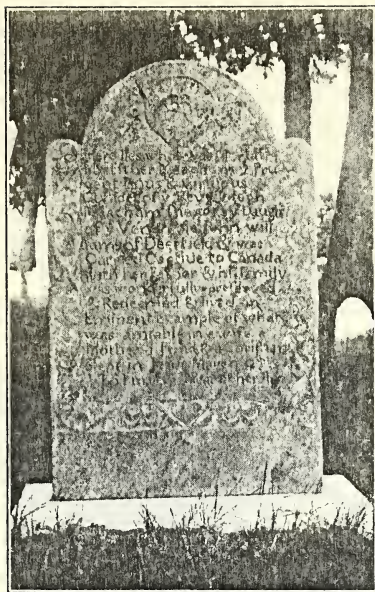
Three years after the petition just mentioned, in the year 1720, Coventry is ordered to send their list to the Assembly as other towns do that they may bear their share of the "Publick" charge. Let us hope they have received some "releas" from their previous "heavy burden" ere this is added unto it.

Development of Churches

The date of the establishment of the first church is uncertain. With the incorporation of the town, provision was made for the securing of a minister as soon as possible.



Gravestone standing in Nathan Hale Cemetery in memory of Rev. Joseph Meacham, first pastor of the First Congregational Church. For the reader's convenience, the inscription is repeated in the text.



Gravestone of Mrs. Joseph Meacham, also standing in Nathan Hale Cemetery.

Pastor Meacham was the one obtained and had one of the good old pastorates, remaining with his people until he died, in 1752, nearly forty years. He is buried in Nathan Hale Cemetery and his virtues are recorded as follows on the stone which marks his grave: "The Rev. Mr. Joseph Meacham was near 40 years ye learned, faithful and painful pastor of ye church in Coventry. He was a man of God, fervent in prayer, zealous and plain in preaching, sincere in reproving, holy and prudent in conversation; a kind husband, tender father, sincere friend; a lover of Christ and souls. Tired with ye labors of

ye World, his ardent soul bent its flight to Jesus, and dropped ye body to rest here till Jesus come. Sept. 15th, 1752, in ye 67th year of his age."

His wife, Esther Williams, of Deerfield, daughter of Rev. John Williams, had endured many hardships of pioneer life previous to her marriage. When but 12 years of age, her mother and the baby were murdered by Indians and the remainder of the family were carried captives into Canada by the savages. For two years she lived with the Indians. What tales she must have been table to tell to the four sons and six daughters who blessed her married life: They were the grandparents of Rev. Nathan Strong, of Hartford, and Rev. Jos. Strong, of Norwich.* Several other descendants were clergymen and one, Rev. G. M. S. Perry, a missionary.

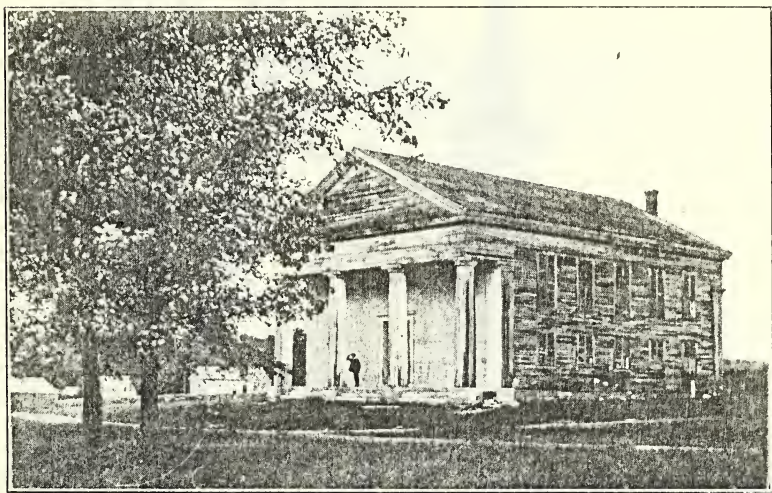
The growth of the church during the first century was slow. In

*Cole's History of Tolland County, Conn.

1811 there were but twenty-nine members, the women being in the majority—twenty-one to eight. Soon after that, a series of revivals under the pastorate of Rev. Chauncey Booth added nearly three hundred members to the church.

In the State Library at Hartford is the manuscript petition from which the following statements regarding a new church in 1766 are taken.

The Society wanted to build a new church and a committee was appointed by the Windham County Court to investigate and decide

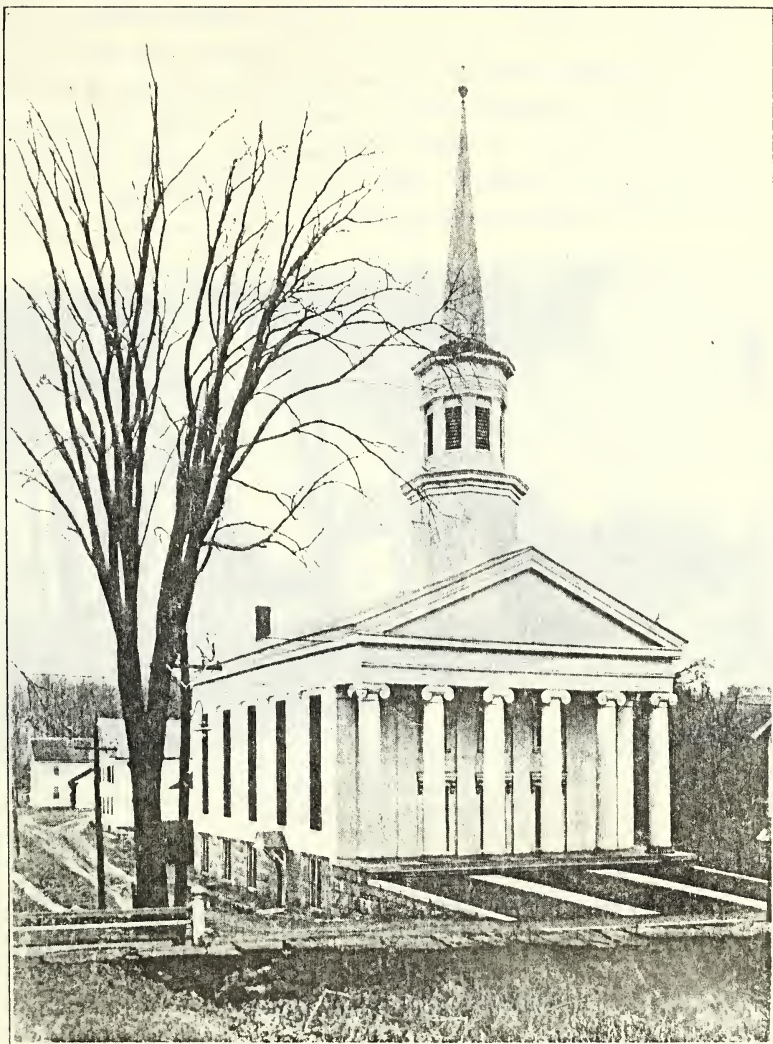


The old Congregational Church in South Coventry that formerly stood on High Street opposite the Green. At the left old Academy Building familiar to the childhood of the older residents.

on a location. The decision which it gave was not favorably received by the Society. A petition was sent to the General Court, asking that the location might be changed up near the school-house where the meeting-house can stand more commodious and "ellegant."

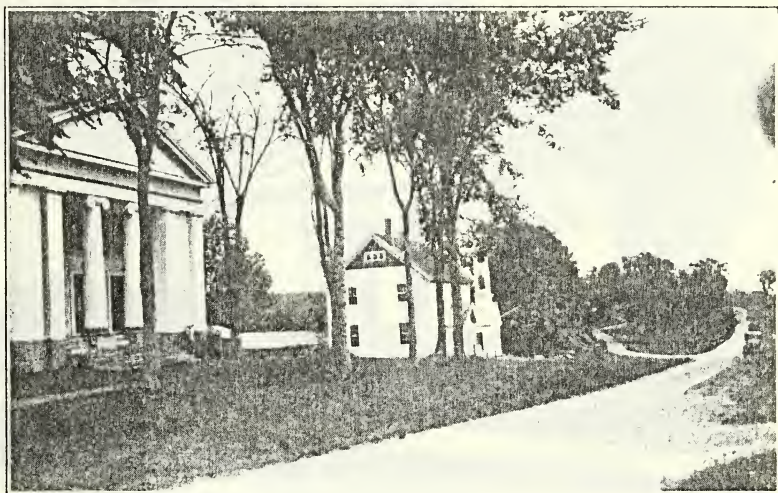
The petition was granted, but it does not seem to be known whether or not a church was built at that time.

The old First Church shown in a remodeled form in the cut was in South Coventry on High Street, opposite the Green. Within the memory of present residents horse-sheds stood on either side of



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SOUTH COVENTRY.
Erected 1849.

it and the old Academy was nearby. Within, were high box pews in the main part of the church and in the galleries which extended around three sides of it. These were later taken out and replaced by more modern sittings. The old church is now gone, having been destroyed by fire, but parts of the old pews are still in existence. These were used in finishing off rooms in houses on Ripley Hill now owned by Rev. Robert H. Sherman and Mr. Frank B. Topliff. The bell in the church at Mansfield Center is the old bell which called to worship in the old South Coventry Congregational Church. The posts to the bell tower became unsafe and the bell



The street in North Coventry, showing at the left the church, chapel and Grange Hall, respectively.

and lumber were exchanged for shingling the church. Town meeting was formerly held in the ground floor room of the old church.

North Coventry Church

This is still the custom in the North Coventry Church. The North Coventry Parish was incorporated in October, 1710, and the Society held its first meeting in the following December. Previ-

ously, in 1737, the town voted to raise one farthing on the pound for the expense of a minister there, who was to preach in the dwelling house of Noah Rust. In 1738, arrangements were made regarding a school and burial ground.

Five years of trouble within the Society, from 1743-1748, resulted in the setting off at that time of still another parish, which was called Andover. Mr. Nathan Strong preached as a candidate in North Coventry in 1744 and was ordained October 9th, 1745. This, according to Cole, was soon after the meeting-house was in condition to use. This first meeting-house was the cause of much



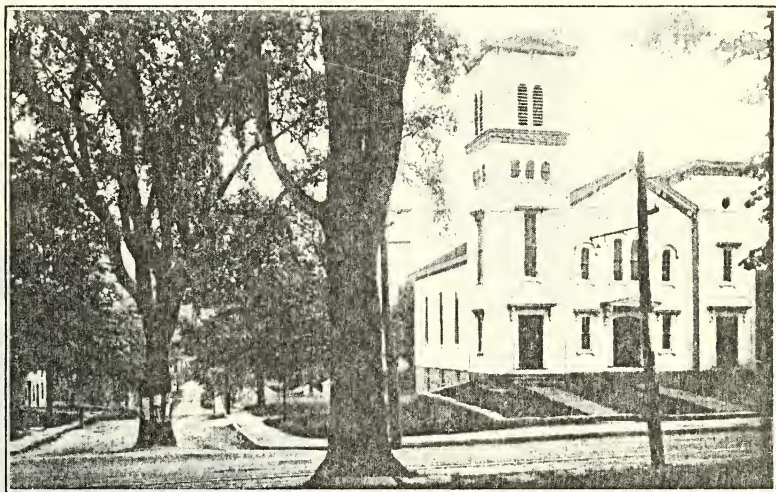
The Second Congregational Church, North Coventry, erected 1847.

trouble. Two surveys were made to determine the center of the parish and a legislative committee chosen to locate the site. It was built a few rods west of the present church and was forty-five feet long and forty broad. It was ten years in process of construction and was never completed.

The church records show that bills for the erection of the church now standing had been paid during the first part of the year 1818, which would seem to make the year of erection 1817. Rev. Hollis M. Bartlett is the present pastor.

Village Church

In 1848 a split occurred in the old First Church in South Coventry. About fifty of the members left and formed a new society. Meetings were held for about a year in a private hall before the present church, known at that time as the Village Church, was ready. The older members of the First Church died until few were left, and in 1866 the two societies again worshipped together. A permanent union of the two under the name of the First Congregational Church of Coventry was effected January 6th, 1869, by a council. This church was received into the fellowship of neighboring churches March 11th of the same year. Rev. Nestor Light has been pastor of the church for thirteen years.



Methodist Church, erected 1867.

Methodist Church

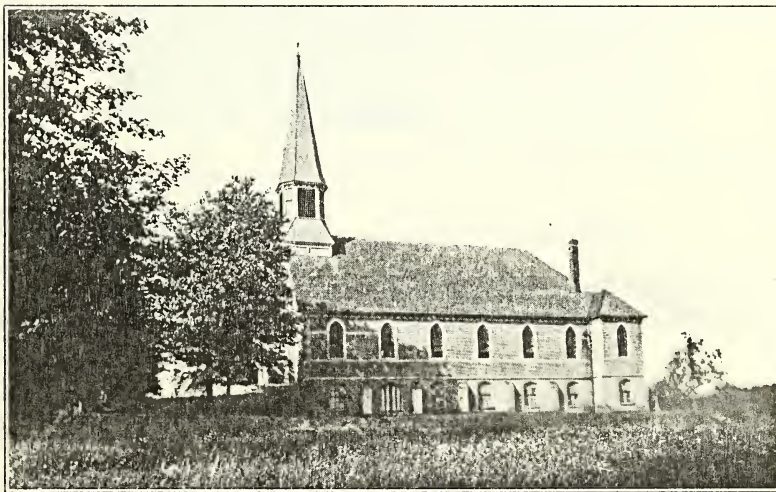
Although Coventry is the birthplace of Lorenzo Dow, one of the early ministers to spread the doctrines of Methodism, it was not until 1822 that the Methodist Church had a definite start. Mr. Gardner, of East Hartford, at this time conducted meetings in the South Street schoolhouse. The early converts were immersed in the

lake. The new movement met with opposition and the use of the schoolhouse was denied them. A private house and an old store on South Street then served as places of worship, but interest waned, and in 1827 not even an organized class existed. Two years after, meetings were again held, this time in the East Street school. In 1839, when it was again attempted to forbid them the use of the building, effort was made to raise money for a church. One thousand two hundred and six dollars and ninety-one cents was collected, and with this a chapel was built. The present building on Main Street in South Coventry was built during the pastorate of Rev. S. S. Cummings. The old church was later used as a temporary church by the Catholics, then as a Methodist parsonage; later it was rented to Father Quinn while the present parochial residence was being built. It is now used as a dwelling.

Rev. Duncan Dodd is the present pastor of the Methodist Church.

Catholic Church

The Catholics at first gathered in private houses for worship. Father McCabe said the first mass in Jeremiah Crowley's house,



St. Mary's Catholic Church, erected 1877.

near the railroad station. This house is now occupied by Mr. Wright, who carries the mail between the postoffice and the trains. As has been previously noted, the old Methodist Church was used by the Catholics for service, beginning about 1863 and continuing for about fourteen years.

On Good Friday, 1877, ground was broken for the foundations of St. Mary's Church. The men of the congregation came in a body to help. The cornerstone was laid on June 10th, 1877, and the work of building was so expeditious that the church was dedicated on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 29th, 1877. The building was accomplished under the guidance of Father Shahan.

After many years of mission relationship, South Coventry was honored on January 2d, 1886, with Rev. J. J. Quinn as first resident pastor. At the establishment of the parish about eighty-five families were included. During Father Quinn's years of service the present parochial residence was built.

Land for a cemetery in the lower part of town was blessed Sunday, August 26th, 1894. Mrs. Carr's grave was the first one in the new cemetery. She was buried September 19th.

The parish includes a considerable territory outside of Coventry. There are two outside stations, one at Eagleville and one at Hop River. Rev. John F. Donahue is the present parish priest.

Schools

In the early allotments of land three were reserved for the support of church and school.

The first school records were made in 1726, as follows:

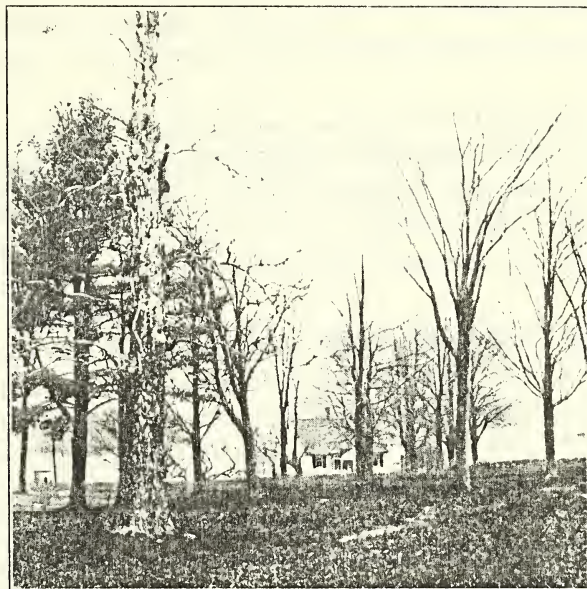
"That ye representatives next May shall lay before the General Assembly ye sercomstances of ye schooll Lott & pray for Liberty to dispos of it for ye use of ye school."

September, 1728, it was "Voted that they would build a school House" and that "ye school house" should be set up within twenty rds. of the meeting house and should be 18 ft. w. and 20 ft. l. Peter Buell, Capt. Samuel Parker and Thomas Porter were appointed a "Comety to carry on ye Building of ye school House."

In November of the same year the salary of the schoolmaster was fixed at not more than eleven pounds for the winter quarter.

The present school in South Coventry village was built in 1873. It contains three departments. Schools are kept in eight other outlying districts.

In the early days the minister of the town was accustomed to fit for college the few youths who aspired for a higher education.



Old Military Training Ground, looking toward the Lake.

Coventry has no high school, but sends its pupils who wish high school work to Willimantic, Rockville, or some other nearby secondary school.

In the fall of 1911, the School Board voted to ask the State to grant us a superintendent of schools. In January, 1912, Mr. George W. Emerson assumed charge in that capacity. He is also in charge of the schools in Lebanon and Columbia.

Training Bands

Almost coincident with the building of the first school, in 1728, was the establishment of two military companies. The first com-

pany was in command of Samuel Parker; the second, in charge of John Bissell.

The green on Monument Hill and High Street was used as a training ground.

Industrial Development

With provision made for the spiritual welfare of the settlement, for the education of the children, and for its military affairs, the development of the farming opportunities in the little settlement went on.

Upon each farm, both outdoors and in, were carried on in miniature many of the various industries which now involve immense machine-equipped plants scattered broadcast throughout the land. The contrast between the home two hundred years ago and the modern home is almost as great as that between the stage coach and the aeroplane.

What would Madam Burchard, Madam Rust, if such there were, or any other of those pioneer dames who lived in their rough homes in the wilderness, have thought if they could have stepped to the telephone and ordered brought to their door bread, pastry, etc.; butter and cheese; hams, bacon, sausage and lard; dried beef, corned beef or cuts of fresh meat; canned vegetables and fruits; soap and candles; to say nothing of fresh fruits from many lands, tea, coffee, spices and many another luxury for the table?

Not so was it indeed in the days two hundred years ago. Bread they had, to be sure, but only after the rye had been sown in prepared ground; the grain harvested, threshed, winnowed and ground; and the bread made, kneaded into loaves and baked. All these processes, except, perhaps, the grinding, had to be performed by some one of the family, or possibly a very occasional helping neighbor. So with many of the other above articles of food, the processes necessary to prepare or preserve must be carried on at home. In those days the yearly or semi-yearly cheese making, candle and soap making were important events.

What was true of food was true also as regards articles of clothing. If my lady needed even a pair of stockings think of the labor involved for different ones of the family: the care of the sheep, the washing and shearing of the wool, the carding, spinning into yarn, reeling into skeins, dyeing and finally knitting. For most other woollen garments weaving took the place of knitting and then the cloth must be fulled, cut and sewed by hand into the article required.

Now it is possible for the mother to step into an automobile, be whirled away to an adjoining city, and secure almost any desired garment all ready to wear.

The early specialists along domestic lines were the dressmaker and tailoress and the cobbler and bootmaker, who went from home to home to help make clothing and shoe the family, often numbering more than a dozen.

Scattered about, especially near Mansfield, one occasionally sees a gnarled old mulberry tree. Some attention was given to raising silkworms in Connecticut as early as 1760. The industry was interfered with during the Revolutionary War. Later it was revived, and at the time of the War of 1812, when importation of raw silk was hindered, Mansfield furnished raw silk for coach lace to a manufacturer in Newark, N. J. This was said to be superior in strength and luster to the best imported silk.*

An occupation outside the regular work of the home and farm was thus opened. Women were often employed. They received the munificent sum of 42 and 50 cents per week and board. Calico dresses were at that time a luxury, to be worn only to church or on some especial occasion. At that time calico cost 64 or 67 cents a yard and girls often worked an entire season picking the mulberry leaves and feeding the worms to get a printed dress, seven yards for \$4.50, which was not homespun.

From now on the change in the industrial life was rapid. In June, 1712, an entry in the town records says that a committee is appointed to arrange for the establishment of a town mill for grinding the settlers' corn.

*Hunt's Merchant's Magazine, Vol. II.

Arrangement was made with Jonathan Hartshorn in 1716 for building and maintaining one. Part of the agreement is as follows:

"That Jonathan Hartshorn for and in the consideration of the said sixty acres of land secured by deed unto said Hartshorn upon consideration of his full compliance for himself, his heirs, his executors, administrators and assigns, for all times, forever, hereafter * * * shall at his and their own proper cost and charge build and erect a good and sufficient grist mill, within the said town of Coventry, on the brook that issueth or runneth from the Great Pond, near the meeting house, and shall also keep and maintain the said grist mill in the said place forever in good repair so that it shall be sufficient to grind all the corn that the inhabitants of the said town shall at all times hereafter have need to be ground, for their use making as good meal as is or shall be generally made by other mills within the aforesaid colony."

The old mill was standing during the memory of many residents and the old millstone near the factory of T. H. Wood Co. now marks the spot.

Thus early was the power of the stream issuing from the Great Pond utilized. It was about a hundred years later before the water power began to be applied to any extent to manufactures.

In 1816 John Boynton built a wool carding mill. Here the farmer's wool could be carded into rolls ready for spinning into yarn. The relief from hand carding left the families with so much extra time that they employed it by doing extra knitting of socks and mittens for sale in New York City. It is said that farmers brought their wool for fifteen miles around to avail themselves of the help which machine work gave.

Mr. Boynton was the inventor of a card machine which was in use in various woolen mills at that time and had a machine shop in which they were made. Other carding machines were in use in the town about this time. A Gazetteer of Connecticut, published for the years 1810-18, gives the following statistics: The manufactures and mechanical employments exclusive of those of a

domestic character consist of one cotton factory, two paper mills, one glass factory, one manufactory of carding machines, three small distilleries, five tanneries, three grain mills, six saw mills and five carding machines. There are seven mercantile stores.

Many mills were burnt. Some of the business enterprises were failures. The following articles are recorded as having been manufactured in Coventry: cheap wool hats for the slave trade, satinets, goods with a cotton warp and good all wool filling, cloth dressing and fulling mill, hooks and eyes, gun cartridges, cotton picker, cotton yarn, cotton cloth, cotton batting and sewing silk.

In Cole's History of Tolland County, published in 1888, the following manufacturers are mentioned as flourishing: A. Kingsbury & Son's paper box factory, the Phoenix Metallic Cartridge Co., A. D. Bottum's sewing silk, C. H. Kenyon & Co.'s woolen mill, A. Washburn & Son's silk mill, T. H. Wood silk business, J. M. Wood, woolen goods.

At present, in 1912, the list is as follows: The T. H. Wood Co., silk throwsters and fish lines; Eugene A. Tracy, Inc., wool extracts; John A. Dady Corp., silk throwsters; Kingsbury Box & Printing Co.; Wm. F. Wood & Son, manufacturers of toric lenses; H. K. & W. A. Washburn, silk throwsters; Valley Mills Co., wool extracts; Wm. H. Armstrong, wagons, hubs, spokes, etc.; South Coventry Paper Co.

Roads

As the early map of the town shows, provision for highways within the settlement was made in the early surveys. After the coming of the settlers from Northampton, Windsor, Hartford, etc., there must have been the broken paths of their making if similar trails had not previously existed.

As the town grew and there was surplus farm produce, such as beef and pork, butter and cheese, trade is said to have been carried on with Norwich landing, ox teams carrying the merchandise to and fro.

Shipping was carried on at that time between Norwich and the West Indies.

In 1769 a petition was sent to the General Assembly for permission to shorten the route between Coventry and Hartford. Later, pikes were established.

In 1797 the Boston Turnpike Co. was incorporated for establishing and keeping in repair a road from Hartford through East Hartford, Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield, Ashford, Pomfret and Thompson to the Massachusetts line. Toll gates were established along the road, but there was none on this pike in Coventry.

The list of tolls and regulations are, however, inserted here:

	cts. mls.
Every travelling four wheel pleasure carriage & horses	25-0
“ chaise, chair & sulky	12-5
“ loaded wagon or cart	12-5
“ empty do or cart	6-3
“ single horse cart	6-3
“ empty horse cart	1-0
Horses, cattle & mules each	2-0
Every pleasure sleigh	6-3
Every loaded sled or sleigh	1-0
“ empty “ “ “	1-0
Man & horse	1-0
Sheep & swine each	1-0

“Provided always, that persons travelling on the Lords day and other days to attend public worship where they ordinarily attend: persons travelling to attend funerals: farmers passing through said gates to attend their ordinary farming business: all persons living within one mile and a half of either of said gates, and not passing said gate further than one mile and a half: persons going to mill on horseback: persons travelling to attend society, town and free-man’s meetings, and persons obliged by law to perform military duty, travelling to attend training, shall not be liable to the payment of said toll.”

The present pike to Hartford was built in 1808 and the lilac-overgrown cellar where the toll house stood may be seen not far from the house now occupied by J. C. Ayer. An elderly friend, who used to live near there, has told me how, as a child, she delighted to run and open the gate for the passer-by.

Travel

Travel was largely on horseback during the early history of the town. Richard Hale, writing to his sons, Nathan and Enoch, at Yale, tells them he will either send them horses for their home-coming or have them procure some in New Haven.

The stage coach in the early part of 1800 was the next step in the transportation of passengers. Austin Dunham, who was born in South Coventry in 1813 and was taken soon after that to Hartford to live, used as a boy to visit his great-aunt, who lived in the Jesse Root house on Ripley Hill. In some sketches of the olden



Main Street in South Coventry, Methodist Church and Postoffice on the right, store of W. L. Wellwood and site of Booth-Dimock Library on the left.

times he mentions the coach trips between there and his home in Hartford. As I write I can see from my window the old house, with the pike in front, and can almost fancy the lumbering old coach with its four horses standing there with its occupants laughing when the farewells are made and great-aunt hopes Austin will soon come again, although he always makes her twice glad—glad when he comes and glad when he goes. We present-day residents have had a taste of coaching. Previous to the time of the trolley,

1909, a coach with two horses used to run between South Coventry village and the depot, meeting the various trains. Now that, too, is but a matter of history.

Trains on the present Central Vermont road commenced running about 1850. The road was then known as the New London, Willimantic and Palmer.

Taverns

Soon after the settlement of the town, among the other officers elected for the year 1715, Nathaniel Rust was named as tavern keeper. Thus early was arrangement made for the traveling public.



Central Vermont Railroad station, showing Mr. Robertson's coach that antedated the trolley.

The old-time legal requirement for a tavern was a spare bed and stable room for two horses.

Someone has said the "Taverns supplied in some degree the place not only of our hotels and eating houses, but of clubs, newspapers and postoffice. What general news ever reached the town was circulated by the nightly gatherings at the tavern."

Some of the older taverns of Coventry are as follows, according to statements made by old residents of the town for Cole's book in 1888:

The oldest one remembered was at the house or location of Wm. Gardner on Ripley Hill, the place now occupied by Albert Baker. The next was at the south end of South Street, with Novatus Cush-

man as landlord. The main road from Hartford to Windham and Brooklyn passed there at that time.

The old tavern on the Hartford and Boston mail stage road is now known as the Pollard place, near the Willimantic River.

The house west of the Jesse Root house, now occupied by George Freeman, was an old tavern. The old sign was in the shape of a shield. On it was the picture of a man with a bird in his hand and a bush with a bird in it, accompanied by the old proverb, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." "Roderick Rose" was the name upon the sign.

After the Hartford pike, running through the town, was opened, a hotel was kept just below Mr. Kolli's harness shop by the following landlords: Azel Edgerton, Charles Carpenter, Mason Dimock and John Bard. John Rose had a hotel at the present Rose place by the Green. Royal Manning succeeded him. At his death, in 1841, the hotel was discontinued. One was kept in the present Thomas Wood place, opposite the Nathan Hale Monument, by Martin Lyman.

The present Bidwell House was opened in 1822 by Solomon Bidwell, whose son and grandson succeeded him.

Mails

The early mails were carried on horseback. Cole says, Bezaleel Hutchison was mail contractor for several years, with the compensation of \$75 a year. The average mail in 1820 was only about two letters a day. Then it took from four to six days between here and New York, and news a week old was hailed with a zest similar to ours over news fresh from the wire. About 1826 the mail was carried between Hartford and Providence by stage. At first, mails were carried but three times a week, but soon daily mails were inaugurated. Transportation of mails was made by steam train about 1850.

Post Offices

The first postoffice is said to have been opened in 1810 at a house in North Coventry at the top of the hill west of the church. Silas

Hubbard was first postmaster. The first office in South Coventry was ten years later, in the house opposite the Nathan Hale Monument, with Jeremiah Parrish as postmaster. The postoffice in North Coventry has now been discontinued. The South Coventry postoffice is in the drug store conducted by L. M. Phillips at the corner of Main and Mason Streets. The territory outside the village is fairly well covered by rural free delivery routes. One starts from the South Coventry office and two from the office in Rockville, while a wagon from South Willington covers a small portion of the town, as does also one from Andover.

War Times

Progress in Coventry, as throughout the country, was affected by the various wars.

French and Indian War

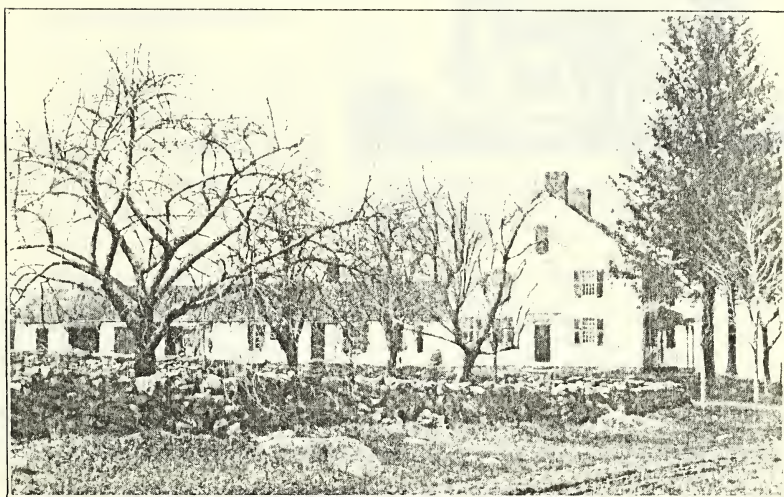
She escaped the earlier Indian wars before the time Coventry was settled, but participated to some extent in the French and Indian War in 1755, as shown by town records, a few of which follow: "Henry Woodward of Cov. was killed by the Indians * * * 1756." "Simon Groves died at Fort Edward of Small pox in Oct. 1657." "Ebenezer Root died of fever in old French war near Lake George, 1758." "Noah Grant joined expedition against Crown Point in 1755." "Lieut. Sol. Grant was ambushed and killed by Indians in this war."

Revolutionary War

At the time of the Revolutionary War Coventry ranked as a considerable town in the colony, with a Grand List of £20,856 and a population of 2,032 whites and 24 blacks. Right nobly did she do her part in the struggle for the independence of the nation.

In October of 1774 the Colonial Assembly of Connecticut required the selectmen of the towns to provide a double quantity of powder, balls and flint. In January, 1775, the same Assembly ordered the entire militia to muster and drill once a week during the three months following. Stirring times there must have been

on the old training green that winter. When the blow at Lexington fell on April 19th, 1775, "horse expresses" carried the news throughout New England. This is Connecticut's response, written April 21st, from Lebanon, the residence of Governor Trumbull, to President Hancock of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress: "Every preparation is making to support your province. * * * The ardor of our people is such that they can't be kept back. The colonels are to forward part of the best men and the most ready as fast as possible, the remainder to be ready at a moment's warning." A hundred and sixteen soldiers are recorded as going from Coventry,



The Hale homestead, residence of Deacon Richard Hale, father of Nathan, now owned by Mr. P. H. Peterson.

ranking well in numbers with any town in the colony. Twenty-seven days is the longest recorded period of service at that time.

In the long struggle which followed it is said that not a soldier had to be drafted in Coventry to fill the quota for the town. Measures were adopted by the town to provide for the families of the absent soldiers and bounties were generously offered.

Encouragement by the citizens of the town in the way of clothing for the soldiers and care of their families was freely given. It is said that Richard Hale, father of Capt. Nathan Hale, would

often during war time forbid his family using the wool from the farm for themselves, that blankets for the soldiers might be made from it. The passing soldier was sure of food and shelter from this patriotic house.

The assistant commissary for the State was Jeremiah Ripley, who lived on Ripley Hill in Coventry. In May, 1777, Capt. Huntington, of Norwich, was ordered to deliver 100 barrels of Continental powder to Cap. J. Ripley, of Coventry, to be carefully kept until further orders.

February 26, 1778, the same Jeremiah Ripley was directed by the General Assembly to send under a guard so soon as might be, two tons of fine powder in his hands to Ezekiel Chevers, Esq., commissary of artillery at Springfield.*



The Ripley homestead, erected in 1792 by Jeremiah Ripley, Assistant Commissary in the Revolution, now the residence of Mr. A. E. Peterson.

Nathan Hale

Over a hundred Coventry men are recorded in the lists of Revolutionary soldiers. We honor all of these men who so bravely did their part, but the name which stands out pre-eminently in Coventry's part in the Revolution is that of Captain Nathan Hale.

At the time when the war broke out, Nathan Hale was teaching in New London. The news of the alarm at Lexington was brought thither by hurrying steed, and upon its receipt a town meeting at once gathered. Nathan Hale was present and spoke as follows: "Let us march immediately and never lay down our arms until we obtain our independence." He enrolled as a volunteer. The next day he met his pupils, "gave them earnest counsel, prayed with them and shaking each by the hand," left.

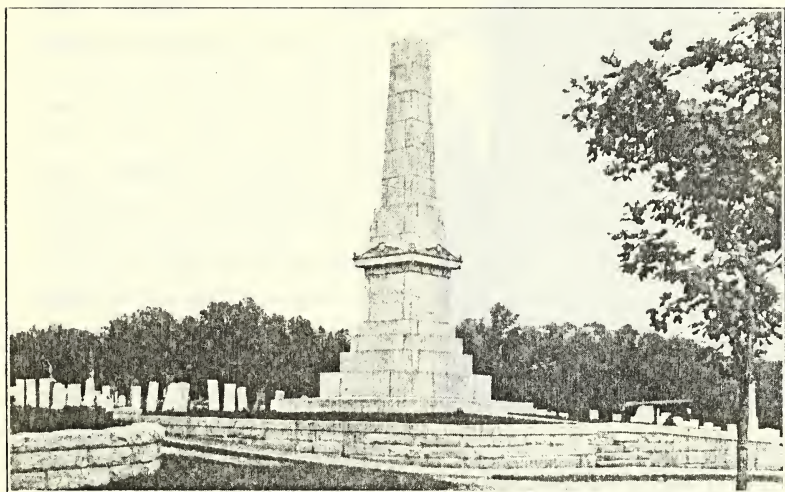
The stay at Lexington was probably not long, but was followed by a permanent connection with the army, a letter to his father

*Colonial Records of Connecticut.

saying that "a sense of duty urged him to sacrifice everything for his country."

In a note of resignation to the school proprietors of his New London school, he says: "Schoolkeeping is a business of which I was always fond. * * * I have thought much of never quitting it but with life, but at present there seems an opportunity for more extended public service."

Hale's company was stationed for a short time at New London, and September 4th, 1775, was ordered to camp near Boston. Jan-



The Nathan Hale Monument and Nathan Hale Cemetery.

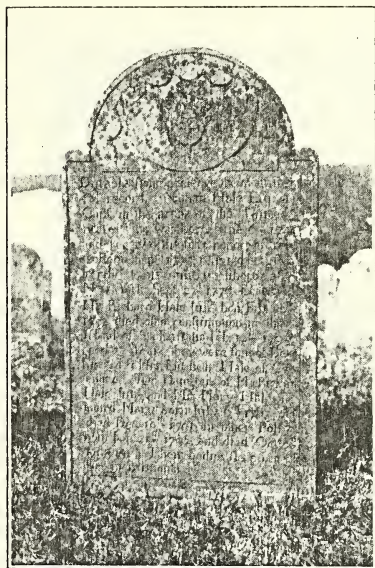
uary 1st, 1776, he was commissioned a captain by Congress. In April he went by way of Norwich to New York. But little is recorded of Hale between this time and September.

At this juncture it was of utmost importance to General Washington to learn if possible the plans of the British troops under Howe on Long Island. An appeal through Knowlton was made to the officers for a volunteer for this service of spying. Hale had been ill and was late in coming to the assembly of officers. Knowlton's request had previously met with no response, but when Hale learned of the need he met it with the words, "I will undertake it."

His attitude toward the work which he undertook is perhaps best shown in the words with which he is said to have answered the entreaties of friends not to undertake so hazardous and, in a way, degrading task: "I think I owe to my country the accomplishment of an object so important, and so much desired by the Commander of her armies—and I know no other mode of obtaining the information, than by assuming a disguise, and passing into the enemy's camp. I am fully sensible of the consequences of discovery and capture in such a situation. But for a year I have been attached to the army, and have not rendered any material service, while receiving a compensation for which I make no return. Yet I am not influenced by the expectation of promotion or pecuniary reward. I wish to be useful, and every kind of service necessary for the public good becomes honorable by being necessary. If the exigencies of my country demand a peculiar service, its claims to the performance of that service are imperious."

The expedition was undertaken by him with the fatal result which we all know. September 22d, 1776, Nathan Hale was hanged as a spy. His last words are said to have been: "My only regret is that I have but one life to lose for my country."

The depth of his patriotism, his unswerving devotion to duty



The Hale gravestone in Nathan Hale Cemetery; the inscription reads: "Durable stone preserve the monumental record, Nathan Hale Esq. a Capt. in the army of the United States who was born June 6th 1755 and received the first honors of Yale College Sept 1773 resigned his life a sacrifice to his country's liberty at New York Sept. 22d 1776 Etatis 22d. Mr. Richard Hale Junr born Feb. 20th 1757 died of a consumption in the Island of St. Eustalia Feb 12th 1793. aged 37 years they were sons of Deac Richard & Mrs. Elizabeth Hale of Coventry. Two daughters of Mr. Richard Hale Junr and Mrs. Mary Hale one nam'd Mary born July 6th 1787 and died Dec. 10th 1791, the other Polly born Jan 25th 1792 and died Oct 2d 1793. Their bodies sleep beneath this monument."

as he saw it, his ardent desire to serve the public in fullest measure, his amiable, vivacious, upright Christian life, and the solemn grandeur of his death are all so full of inspiration to us in these later days and to our children after us that we should all be grateful for the memorials which have been erected to his memory and which serve to bring his life again and again to the minds of men. One stands at the entrance to the cemetery which bears his name. The old family stone in the same yard also records his life and death. The one pictured on the cover is in New York City. Two are in Hartford, one at the capitol and one in the Ateneum grounds. Still another is at Huntington, L. I., where he was supposed to have been captured.

War of 1812

That Coventry shared in this war is evidenced by the stones in the cemeteries of the town. In the different cemeteries of the North Parish seventeen soldiers in this war are buried.

Civil War

During this war, the town again voted premiums and bounties to volunteers. In September, 1862, the war committee reported "That forty-four men have enlisted, making three more than enough to fill the quota." It was also voted: "That a meeting of the citizens of this town be held at this house next Saturday evening at 7 o'clock * * * to speak a kind word to our volunteers, who are especially invited to attend." A committee was appointed to arrange for the Saturday evening meeting.

In January, 1864, record is made of the successful efforts of the war committee in procuring men to enlist to fill the quota of the town under the Proclamation of the President calling for 300,000 men, so that a draft will not be necessary.

Prominent Coventry Men of the Eighteenth Century

The list of Coventry men who have served the country either at home or abroad is one of which to be proud.

Confining our attention to the eighteenth century, one of the most interesting characters was Lorenzo Dow, the Methodist ex-

horter. He was born in Coventry, Conn., October 16th, 1777. His parents, Humphrey B. and Tabitha (Parker) Dow, were natives of the same place. A sudden illness at the age of 12 caused him to give attention to religious matters and led to his becoming a preacher of the Methodist denomination. He visited Ireland and England, preaching to immense crowds. In the United States he traveled extensively, holding camp meetings in the woods, preaching in halls and houses when churches were not open to him. He was accompanied by his wife, Peggy, after his marriage, who shared his vicissitudes. She died January 6th, 1820, and is buried in Hebron, Conn. Lorenzo died in Georgetown, D. C., February 2d, 1831. "Love to God and Man" is the sum of true religion.

A view of Harlan Page's birthplace is here shown. He was born in 1791. He organized the first Sunday school class in the church at North Coventry. He became a convert to the Baptist faith and became a missionary in connection with the American Tract Society.

Jesse Root, whose picture forms the frontispiece, was a native of Coventry, born December 28th, 1736. He graduated from Princeton in 1756. After three years as a minister, he studied law and was admitted to the bar in Hartford County, 1763. He served as a lieutenant-colonel in the Revolution and was a member of the Continental Congress between 1778-83. He was judge of the Superior Court for many years and chief justice of Connecticut, 1796-1807. At the age of 82 he opened the Constitutional Convention in 1818.



Lorenzo Dow, a Methodist preacher in many lands. (From engraving in "Life, Experience, and Travels of Lorenzo Dow," by Rev. John Dowling, D. D. New York, 1854.)

John Strong, who was born in Coventry August 16th, 1738, appears to have been prompted by the pioneer instinct of the time. He moved to the north and settled on the east side of Lake Champlain, where he became eminent as a legislator and local judge. In 1791 he sat in the convention that ratified the United States Constitution.

Nathan Strong, Jr., and Joseph Strong were born in Coventry, the former, October 16th, 1748; the latter, September 21st, 1753, sons of Nathan Strong, pastor in North Coventry. The former was ordained pastor of the First Church in Hartford January 5th, 1774, was a chaplain in the Revolutionary army, and one of the chief founders of the Connecticut Missionary Society in 1798.



Home of Harlan Page, the missionary,
now remodeled and occupied
by William Sparne.

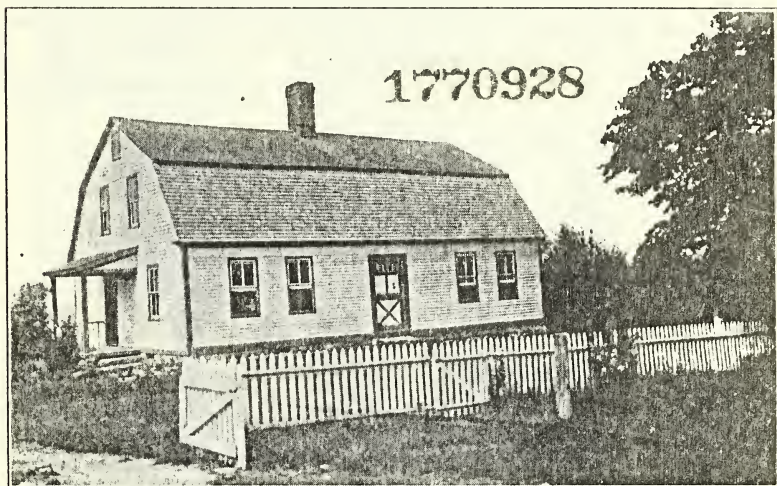
Joseph was for fifty-six years pastor of the First Church in Norwich. Both brothers were Yale graduates and authors of many ecclesiastical works.

Samuel Huntington, the third governor of the state of Ohio, was another native of Coventry, born October 4th, 1765. He was a nephew of Samuel Huntington, signer of the Declaration of Independence, by whom he was adopted and educated as a lawyer. Previous to his gubernatorial term, 1809-10, he was a delegate to the Ohio State Constitutional Convention of 1802, judge of the Court of Common Pleas and also of the Supreme Court, and state senator in the first General Assembly of 1803. In the second war with Great Britain, 1812-13, he was district paymaster, with the rank of colonel.

Joseph Huntington is better known to Coventry's history, although not a native. He was born in the neighboring town of

Windham, May 5th, 1735, and was a brother of the signer, Samuel, mentioned above. He was graduated from Yale in 1762, and one year later, June 29th, 1763, was ordained pastor of the First Church in Coventry and remained here until his death in 1791. It is interesting to note that under his tutelage Nathan Hale was prepared for college.

Joel Jones was another native of Coventry—born October 25th, 1795—who migrated at an early age. He became a lawyer in Easton, Pa., and was one of the founders of Lafayette College. In



Jesse Root Homestead on Ripley Hill, elaborately described in Austin C. Dunham's "Reminiscences" in Hartford Daily Courant of April 6th, now owned by Ferdinand Zechel's estate.

1847-9 he was the first president of Girard College in Philadelphia and was mayor of that city in 1849.

Libraries in Coventry

As the present year is seeing the construction of a beautiful library building in our town, it is fitting to bring this historic sketch to a close in tracing the development of our libraries.

Certain old books give evidence of the existence of a library previous to 1800 known as the Social Library.

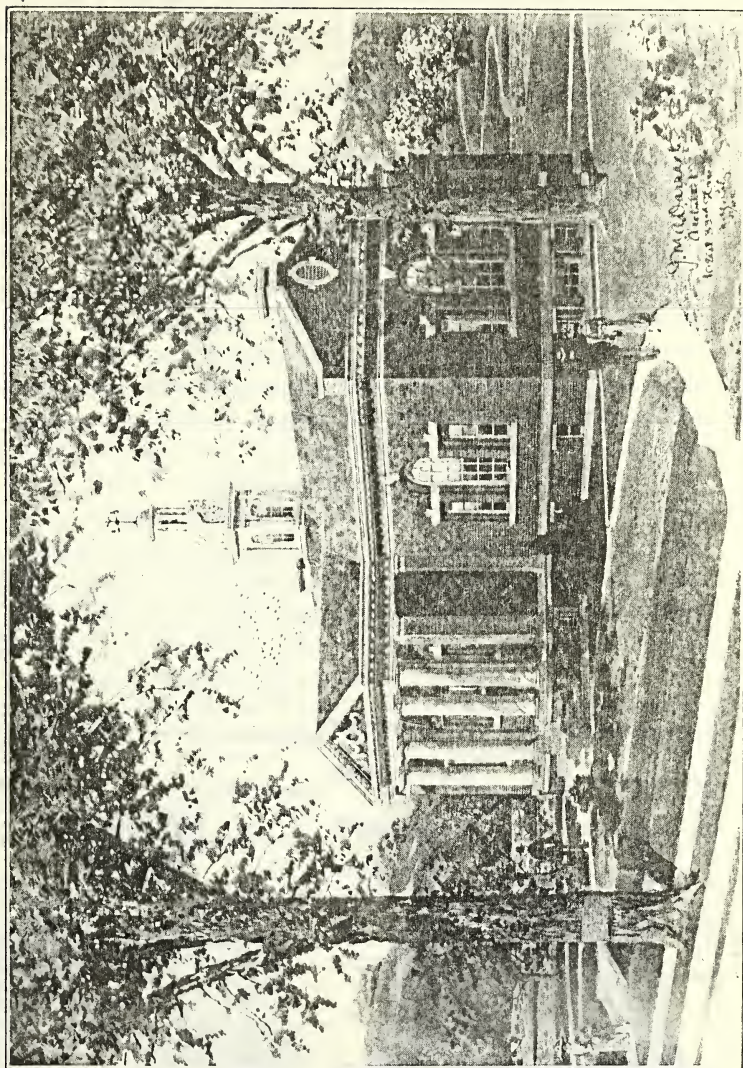
The next library in Coventry was made possible by the legacy which was left by Mrs. Sarah Hale of \$3,333.33 in 1803. Mrs. Hale was the wife of John Hale, a brother of Nathan Hale, and her will carried out the wishes of her husband, who died before she did. By the terms of the will the library was especially for the use of ministers or those who wished to study for the ministry or for missionary work. A certain percent of the money was to form a cumulative fund and has now amounted to over \$10,000. Another part each year is for the purchase of books, and still another is for the aid of students who wish to be ministers or missionaries. The library at present is at the Congregational parsonage. It is known as the Hale Donation Library. A portrait of John Hale is to be found there.



Library occupied by the South Coventry Library Association since 1891.

The beginnings of the present small library in South Coventry would certainly seem to illustrate the fulfillment of the promise to those who cast their bread upon the waters. A friendless boy was cared for and clothed by some kindly women here. Years passed and the poor boy became a wealthy man. Dr. Cogswell, the man just mentioned, wrote from California in 1879, offering to give \$500 toward the establishment of a library if the people here would raise a similar sum.

Due to this stimulus, the South Coventry Library Association was organized in 1880 and books were loaned on a small payment per year until very recently, when it was made free, the town giving \$100 annually and the state furnishing each year the same amount



BOOTH AND DIMOCK MEMORIAL LIBRARY IN PROCESS OF ERECTION.

Donated by the late Henry F. Dimock.

in books. The present building, pictured here, was once used as a postoffice, but was purchased by the Association in 1894 for use as a library. The library contains about 4000 volumes.

The Porter Library in North Coventry was started in 1886 by Thomas E. Porter and the widow of Dr. John Porter, each of whom gave \$200. This library, as well as that in South Coventry, were beneficiaries in the will of Wm. B. Kingsbury to the extent of about \$1,200 apiece.

In 1911 the late Henry F. Dimock left \$40,000 in perpetuation of the memory of his grandfather, Rev. Chauncey Booth, and his father, Timothy Dimock, M. D., to build and endow a library to be known as the Booth and Dimock Memorial Library. This explains the building now in process of erection, and the accompanying illustration will show how the building will look at completion. Thus generously has Coventry been aided by her sons and friends.

As this manuscript is going to press the citizens of Coventry in town meeting assembled, August 3d, 1912, have anticipated the bicentennial exercises in a very practical manner by purchasing the A. O. U. W. Hall on Wall Street, to be used as a Town Hall.

Thus in briefest outline has the attempt been made to trace developments from the beginnings to present accomplishments. Many changes have there been, and, we trust, great advance. "Old-fashioned manners are disappearing; let not old-fashioned virtues also disappear. Let not the material prosperity produce nor accompany a decrease of intellectual or moral worth."



Coventry's oldest married couple, Mr. and Mrs. William O. Gardiner, aged 88 and 85 respectively. They have been married 61 years.

A POEM IN COMMEMORATION OF THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOWN
OF COVENTRY

RUTH AMELIA HIGGINS

Long ago when the Indian bold
 Stalked about over meadow and hill,
Or skulked in thicket, on ledge,
 Near the course of river or rill;
When the rivers were not yet harnessed,
 Nor the forest monarchs laid low
And the wind which came from the northward
 But rumors vague did blow
Of the white man, the pale-face conqueror,
 Who, armed with his weapons of fire,
Was taking away from the redman
 The land he had fought to acquire;
When as yet in this peaceful valley
 No sign was seen of the foe
Who should take the peace of the Indian
 And work for his overthrow.

To this land where lived the Mohegan
 The dreaded white man came
At last, but quiet and peaceful
 Redeemed somewhat the name.
And ventured at length to demand,
 As mildly as might be,
The sale of a large stretch of country
 Where all might live peacefully.

Then were the young braves angry
 And swore by all that was free
That the white man should die like a traitor
 Before such ruin should be.
But Joshua, the brave and the thoughtful,
 Sage chief of the council of war,
Restrained their impetuous madness
 Before they were carried too far;
Rebuked their unfriendly spirit
 With words of wisdom and calm;
Recommended they sell to the white man,
 Be courteous and do him no harm.

So a broad stretch of hill and of valley,
 With rocks, with bad soil and good,
 Was gained by the will of the great chief;
 And where wigwams had stood
 Rose the simple log-cabin or frame house,
 The home of the pioneer,
 With its work, its pleasures, its frolics,
 The center of health, of good cheer.

Just two hundred years have passed by it
 Since that town was founded there—
 The town with the lake of crystal,
 With the cool, refreshing air,
 With hills of green for a setting,
 With land to work and till;
 With the cheerful hum of the workshop
 And the busy whirl of the mill.



Oak tree on the property of Mr. Carl
 G. Johnson, grown from an acorn
 from Connecticut's famous Char-
 ter Oak.

Two centuries! and in the
 meantime

A nation's life was bought;
 And then with brothers' blood
 In unity was wrought.

The little town was courageous,
 Always doing more than her
 share;—

Nathan Hale and lesser heroes
 Firmly stood forth to do and
 to dare.

Heroes of peace are not want-
 ing—

Justice Root and Lorenzo
 Dow,

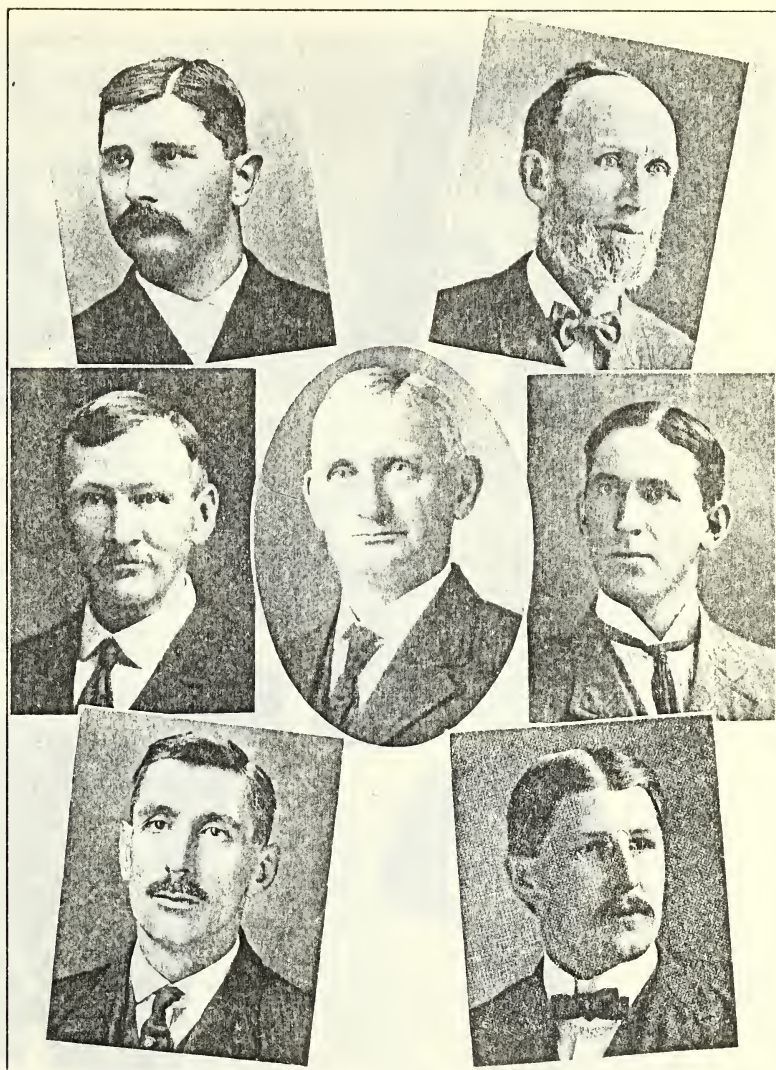
Many men of uprightness and
 honor,
 The pride of the town, then
 and now.

And to-day, as we look o'er
 that village,

Named for the one 'cross the
 sea,

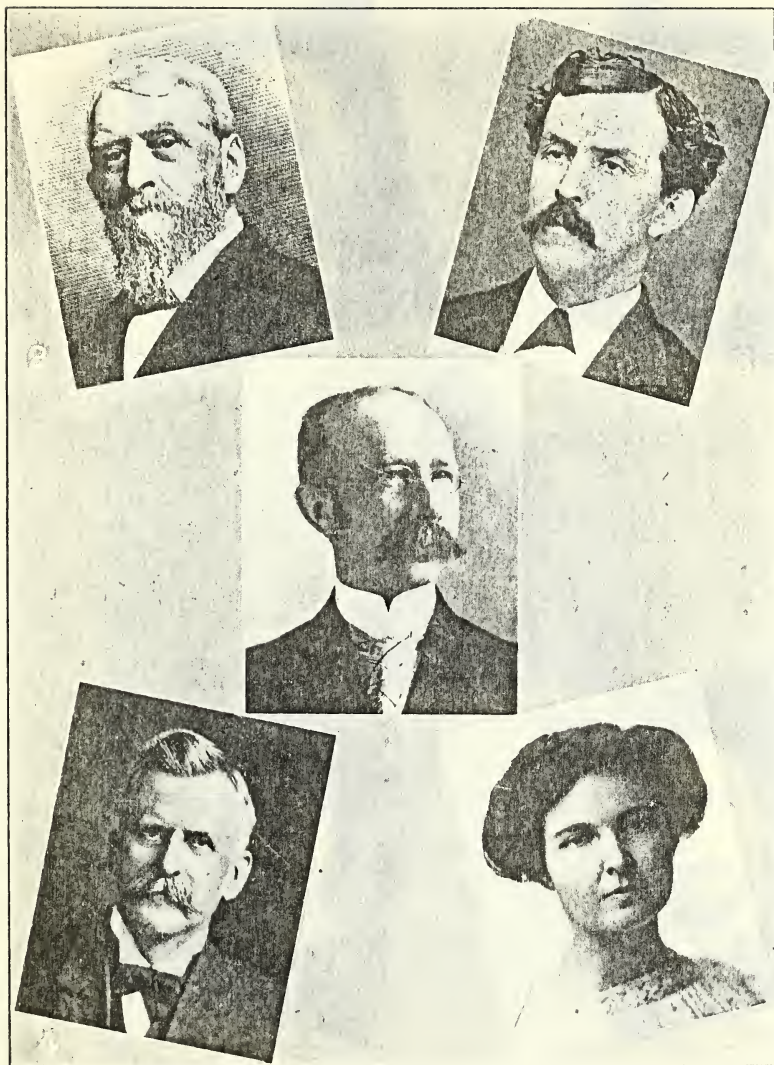
It seems to extend hearty wel-
 come

To you, from old Coventry.



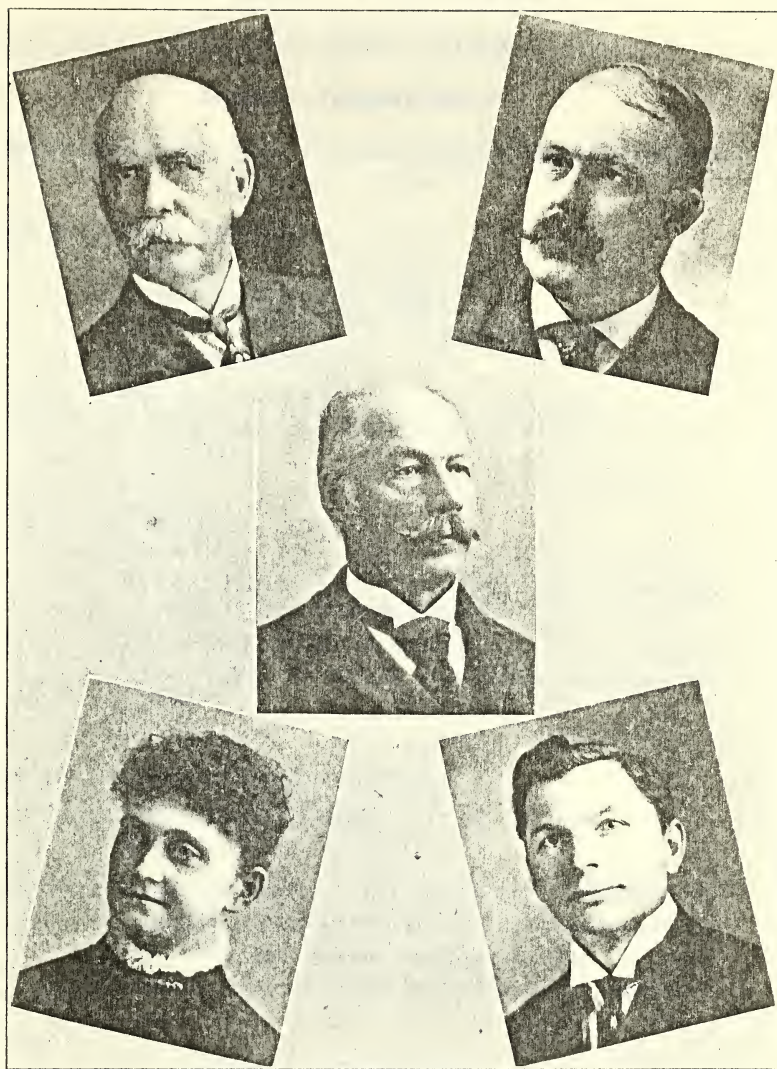
TOWN OFFICERS, 1912.

(1) John H. Reynolds, First Selectman; (2) Arthur B. Porter, Selectman; (3) George Rosebrooks, Selectman; (4) Perkins L. Lathrop, Representative; (5) J. Montgomery White, Representative; (6) John S. Champlin, Town Clerk and Treasurer; (7) George H. Robertson, Judge of Probate.



OFFICIALS FOR THE TOWN FOR OLD HOME WEEK.

(1) Dr. William L. Higgins, President; (2) Addison Kingsbury, Treasurer; (3) Charles W. Lee, Vice-president; (4) Curtis Dean, Secretary and Historian; (5) Miss Ruth A. Higgins, Poetess.



CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES FOR COVENTRY'S BICENTENNIAL.

(1) Henry F. Parker, Hospitality Committee; (2) John M. Wood, Decorating Committee; (3) De Witt Kingsbury, Finance Committee; (4) Mrs. Thomas H. Wood, Relics Committee; (5) Ernest H. Woodworth, Parade Committee.

OFFICIAL PROGRAM

FOR OLD HOME WEEK

Sunday, August 25th

ORDER OF EXERCISES, FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SOUTH
COVENTRY, CONN.

- 10.45 A. M.: Organ Voluntary.
Doxology.
Invocation, REV. D. F. DODD.
Hymn 248, "O God Our Help in Ages Past."
Responsive Reading.
Solo, R. A. STORRS.
Scripture Lesson, Luke XII, 22-40, REV. H. M.
BARTLETT.
Prayer.
Offering.
Anthem.
Sermon, Psalms LXXVII 10-12, "Life in the Old
Church," REV. NESTOR LIGHT.
Prayer, REV. H. M. BARTLETT.
Hymn 1019, "O Where Are Kings and Empires
Now?"
Benediction.
- 7.30 P. M.: Service of Worship and Song.
Soloist, W. A. TUCKER.
Scripture Lesson, Isaiah LI, 1-6.
- 8.00 P. M.: "Congregationalism in Connecticut," illustrated by
numerous stereopticon pictures of persons, places,
churches and historic landmarks, REV. SHERRON
SOULE, Superintendent of Missions for Connecti-
cut.

Monday, August 26th

NORTH COVENTRY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

- 8.00 P. M.: A Cantata, "The Haymakers," by local talent;
CHARLES W. LEE, Director.

Tuesday, August 27th

BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SOUTH COVENTRY, CONN.

9.00 A. M.: Devotional Services, led by REV. GEORGE W. CHRISTIE.

9.30 A. M.: Roll Call of the Church.
Letters from absent members.
Letters from former pastors.

11.00 A. M.: "The First Hundred Years," REV. NESTOR LIGHT.

12.00 M.: Luncheon by the Ladies of the Church.

2.00 P. M.: Devotional Services, led by REV. D. F. DODD.

2.15 P. M.: Historical Papers:

The Meeting Houses, WILLIAM J. WILSON, JR.

The Y. P. S. C. E., MISS HANNAH B. POTTER.

The Sunday School, MISS GERTRUDE MACFARLAND.

The Work of the Women of the Church, MISS RUTH A. HIGGINS.

3.15 P. M.: Bi-Centennial Poem, FORREST MORGAN.

3.45 P. M.: "The Second Hundred Years," REV. NESTOR LIGHT.

7.00 P. M.: Devotional Services, led by REV. H. M. BARTLETT.

7.15 P. M.: Addresses: REV. D. F. DODD representing the M. E. Church, South Coventry; REV. H. M. BARTLETT representing the Second Congregational Church, North Coventry; REV. JOHN J. LOCKETT representing the Congregational Church, Andover.

8.00 P. M.: Address, REV. ASHER ANDERSON, D. D., Secretary National Council of Congregational Churches.

Tuesday, August 27th—Continued

COMMITTEES IN CHARGE OF CHURCH CELEBRATION.

Committee of Arrangements.

REV. NESTOR LIGHT

WM. L. HIGGINS, M. D.

HON. ADDISON KINGSBURY

CURTIS DEAN, Esq.

Finance Committee.

MR. LOUIS A. KINGSBURY

MR. JOHN M. WOOD

MR. ROYAL H. ROSE

Relics Committee.

MR. DE WITT KINGSBURY

MISS HATTIE ALBRO

MRS. VAN R. BENNETT

Decoration Committee

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor

Entertainment Committee of the Ladies' Association.

MRS. WM. F. WOOD

MRS. MARVIN P. COLEMAN

MRS. ALBERT E. HARMON

MRS. WM. L. HIGGINS

MRS. WM. C. LATIMER

MRS. THERON E. DUNHAM

Wednesday, August 28th

EXERCISES AT NORTH COVENTRY.

10.00 A. M.: Music, Hebron Fife and Drum Corps.

10.30 A. M.: Invocation, REV. H. R. HOISINGTON.

Music.

Address of Welcome, REV. H. M. BARTLETT.

Music.

Historical Address, REV. LEON H. AUSTIN.

Music.

12-2 P. M.: Lunch and Social Hour, with music by Fife and Drum Corps.

2.00 P. M.: Short speeches and toasts by residents of the town and visiting friends. CHARLES W. LEE, Toastmaster.

Thursday, August 29th

TOWN HISTORICAL EXERCISES AT SOUTH COVENTRY.

- 9.00 A. M. : Music, Hebron Fife and Drum Corps.
- 10.00 A. M. : Invocation, REV. LEON H. AUSTIN.
Music.
Address of Welcome by the Chairman, DR. WILLIAM L. HIGGINS.
Music.
Reading of letter from His Excellency, GOVERNOR SIMEON E. BALDWIN.
Greetings from the State, by His Honor, LIEUT.-GOVERNOR D. L. BLAKESLEE.
Greetings from Coventry, England, letter from MAYOR W. F. WYLEY.
Greetings from Yale University.
Address by PROF. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, JR., of Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., and JUDGE CARL FOSTER, of Bridgeport.
- 12-2 P. M. : Social hour, with music by Fife and Drum Corps.
- 2.00 P. M. : Historical Address, CURTIS DEAN.
Original Poem, MISS RUTH A. HIGGINS.
Weber Quartette.
History of the Manufacturing Interests of Coventry, HON. ADDISON KINGSBURY.
Short sketches of some of the old residents of the town, HENRY F. PARKER.
Addresses from citizens of the town and from visitors.
Singing, "America," led by the Town Choir.
- 8.00 P. M. : Cantata, "The Haymakers," by local talent in the First Congregational Church; CHARLES W. LEE, Director.

Friday, August 30th

- 9.00 A. M. : Music by the Baltic Brass Band, the Hebron Fife and Drum Corps, and the Nathan Hale Fife and Drum Corps.
- 11.00 A. M. : Parade.
- 2.00 P. M. : Ball game and sports of various kinds.
- 8.00 P. M. : Fireworks.

Saturday, August 31st

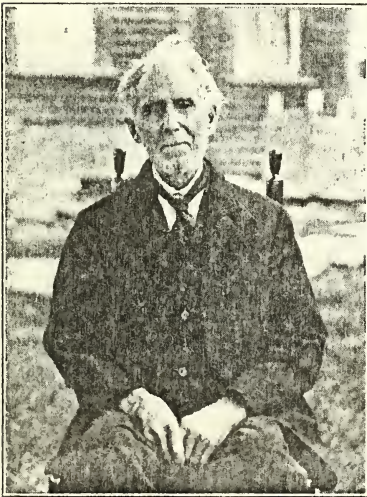
FAMILY REUNIONS, PICNICS, AND VISITS TO HISTORIC PLACES.

For the convenience of the visitor some of the places of historic interest are listed below:

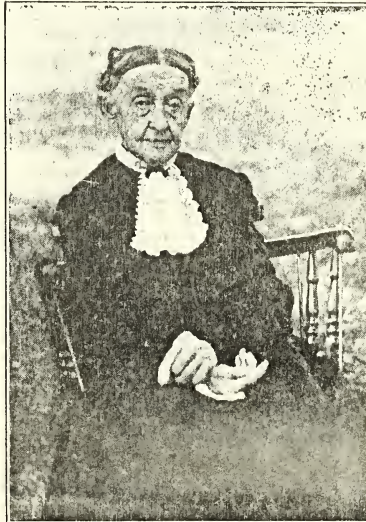
Nathan Hale Cemetery; Nathan Hale Monument.
Site of old grist mill, and old mill-stone.
Site of First Congregational Church.
Site of the old Academy.
Old training ground.
Old Methodist Church, later Catholic Church.
Royal Manning Tavern.
Manning Store.
Perkins Rose's Store.
Old Brick Schoolhouse.
Site of Samuel Burchard's house, probably the first house.
Former home of Rev. Chauncey Booth.

Lorenzo Dow's birthplace.
Pomeroy Tavern.
Mason's Cotton Mill.
John Boynton's Machine Shop.
Old Foundry.
Old Cotton Mill.
Site of the Strong homestead, probable birthplace of Nathan Hale's mother.
Jesse Root's house.
Jeremiah Ripley's house.
Old Toll Gate.
Hale Homestead.
Offspring of Charter Oak.
Harlan Page house.
Crowley house, where first Catholic services were held.
Old tavern near Mansfield Depot, where Washington once stopped.

Collections of material of historic interest will be on exhibition in the basement of the Methodist Church in South Coventry and in the Chapel at North Coventry.



The oldest male inhabitant, Mr. Henry Case, born March 20, 1823, and so 89 years old.



The oldest female inhabitant, Mrs. Fanny Brewster, born March 20, 1819, and so 93 years old.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES TO ARRANGE PLANS
FOR "OLD HOME WEEK" IN COVENTRY,
AUGUST 25TH TO 31ST, 1912

Officers and Executive Committee

President, WILLIAM L. HIGGINS

Vice-president, CHARLES W. LEE

Secretary, CURTIS DEAN

Treasurer, ADDISON KINGSBURY

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CHARLES R. HALL

LOUIS A. KINGSBURY

MRS. JOHN M. WOOD

MRS. S. NOBLE LOOMIS

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MRS. WM. H. ARMSTRONG

MRS. LUCY HAVEN

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HENRY C. WALKER

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ALEXANDER H. POMEROY

MRS. WM. F. WOOD

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MRS. CHARLES R. HALL

MRS. BENJ. TAYLOR

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WILLIAM H. ARMSTRONG

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MRS. OLIVER C. HALL	

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GEORGE H. ROBERTSON, <i>Chairman</i>	JOHN P. CURLEY
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EVERETT LATHROP	

Historian

CURTIS DEAN

Poeless

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MRS. WM. A. WRIGHT	MRS. JOHN N. WALLBRIDGE
FREDERICK J. SNYDER	PERKINS L. LATHROP
MISS JULIA WHITE	H. BERTRAM POMEROY
MRS. GEORGE H. ROBERTSON	WILLIAM F. PITKIN
MISS HELEN POTTER	MRS. ROBERT PITKIN

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